

Beverly Vista School, Manual Arts and Classroom Building
(Beverly Vista School, Building B)
200 South Elm Drive
Beverly Hills
Los Angeles County
California

HABS
CAL
19-BEVH,
3B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

**Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107**

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BEVERLY VISTA SCHOOL,
MANUAL ARTS AND CLASSROOM BUILDING (Building B)

HABS NO. CA-2704-B

Location: 200 South Elm Drive. Building B faces north onto Charleville Boulevard, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles County, California.

Beverly Hills, California 7.5-minute USGS Quadrangle,
Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) Coordinates:
Building B: Zone 11, Easting 371990, Northing 3769420

Present Owner: Beverly Hills Unified School District (BHUSD or District)
255 South Laskey Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Original Use: Public Elementary School; Classrooms and Manual Arts

Present Use: Elementary School, however, Building B is vacant

Significance:

At Beverly Vista, the Auditorium/Manual Arts Building (Building B) is a fine example of public school design. Building B, was designed by the Los Angeles architectural firm of Gable and Wyant in the Italian Romanesque Revival style. Incorporating the distinguishing characteristics of this architectural idiom such as brick exterior walls, a tiled roof, an extensive and unifying use of arches as a decorative motif, and a tower which is reminiscent of ecclesiastical Romanesque precedents. Gable and Wyant were particularly known for their work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, as for example, in their design for Hangar 1 (1929) at the Los Angeles International Airport. Beverly Vista illustrates their facility with a different but related architectural vocabulary. The use of the Romanesque Revival style also represents a distinctly traditional choice of architectural imagery. While all of the other schools in the district showcase the Spanish style, that eventually became integral to the mythology of southern California, Beverly Vista suggests a more urban approach to school design. Constructed in 1925, with an addition added in 1927, Building B is the second oldest extant public school building constructed by the District in Beverly Hills.

A. General Statement:

1. History:

Spanning the width of the north end of the campus along Charleville Boulevard, between Elm and Rexford Drives, Building B is the most complex of the three historic buildings. The west half of Building B, designated the Manual Arts Building was constructed in 1925. What became the east half of Building B, the Auditorium and Classroom structure, was completed in 1927. Building B was designed by the Los Angeles based architectural firm of Gable and Wyant. Principal alterations to Building B include the replacement of some of the windows and the addition of a brick stair tower just west of the bell tower.

2. Architectural Character:

Reflecting its varied assortment of interior spaces, the Italian Romanesque Revival building is not symmetrical. Building B incorporates the distinguishing characteristics of this architectural idiom such as brick exterior walls, a tiled roof, an extensive and unifying use of arches as a decorative motif, and a tower which is reminiscent of ecclesiastical Romanesque precedents. Further, Building B is a good example of public school design.

3. Summary Description:

The building is topped by tiled, front and side gables and anchored by a three story bell tower located on the northeast corner of the structure. Entrances to the tower face north and east and reiterate the design of the entries to Buildings A and C. Double windows set into single arches outlined with contrasting voussoirs sit above the entries. The upper level of the tower contains three-part arcades on all four sides. Arches are repeated in several places on the building, in the bands of corbeling below the second story windows and on the gable ends, and in the shapes of occasional windows and the building entrance located near the west end of the structure. Building B is also distinguished by highly decorative brick work, incorporating herringbone, diamond, and semicircular patterns. Cast stone rondels adorned with shields further enhance the design.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions:

The two-story, rectangular shaped Building B measures approximately 88'-6" by 201'-7" overall. The total square footage of the building is approximately 31,023.

2. Foundations:

Concrete post (pier) and girder foundation.

3. Wall Construction:

Unpainted, wire-cut brick varying in color from brown to red to ochre. The brick work is primarily common bond, with herringbone and diamond patterning below the front gable ends and flanking the entry in the shed-roofed projection on the north elevation.

4. Structural System, Framing:

West end of building: unreinforced masonry.

East end of building: poured-in-place concrete frame with brick veneer.

Classrooms: unreinforced masonry.

5. Porches, Balconies, Bridges:

The first floor of Building B has two covered walkways, one connecting to Building A and one connecting to Building C. The second floor of Building B has two bridges, one that connects to Building A and one that connects to Building C.

6. Chimney:

None

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors:

Door placements: Main auditorium and building access is through double doors (replaced) that are raised five steps above street level and face north and east at the base of the tower. The entries (at grade level)

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to the main corridor of the west wing on the north and south elevations have double doors. The classroom (B100) entry is on the north elevation.

The stage entry is on the north elevation (facing west) and an entry to the auditorium from west end bay is on the north elevation. Entries to two east wing corridors are located on the south elevation.

Door materials and types: The tower entry has metal double doors (not original) with nine lights in the upper halves. This entry is topped by lunettes with radiating muntins. The north and south entries to the west corridor have double wood doors with nine lights over single panels. These entries are also topped by lunettes with radiating muntins. Classroom entries have single wood doors with nine lights over a panel. Original hardware is intact. The classroom entries are topped by a three light transom. The stage has double paneled wood doors with original hardware. Auditorium doors are double wood doors with six lights over each panel, topped by ten light transoms. The southwest entry to the east wing has double metal doors with nine lights in the upper halves. These doors are topped by fourteen light transoms. The southeast entry to the east wing has double wood doors with nine lights over single panels and lunettes with radiating muntins.

b. Windows:

Window shape and placement: There is symmetrical fenestration along the east elevation with three flat-headed, double sash windows on both levels flanking a central bay containing a pair of arched windows on the first floor and three arched windows on the second floor. Symmetrical fenestration is also evident on the west elevation with three bays of three flat-headed windows in the center of both stories and paired, round-headed windows topping single flat-headed windows in the end bays. Asymmetrical north elevation fenestration, from east to west includes: three bays of large, single, round-headed auditorium windows, two circular second story windows, five bays of flat-headed windows, a pair of round-headed windows on the second story, and three bays of flat-headed windows, with a pair of narrow openings substituted in the first floor central bay. The south elevation fenestration has two sets of three

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bays of flat-headed double windows, each flanked on the east by smaller, single, flat-headed windows. All but the auditorium windows are recessed a few inches.

Window materials and type: Windows on the north elevation are wood-framed originals. Auditorium openings are double, six-over-six-over-six awnings topped by lunettes with radiating muntins. Flat-headed windows are six-over-six double-hung sash with three light transoms. All other windows are aluminum frame replacements, divided into three parts, with the top lights enclosed by panels (except on the south elevation).

Window features: Flat-headed windows have soldier brick lintels and projecting header courses for sills. There are various treatments of round-headed windows, including on the east elevation first floor, paired brick semicircular heads with a common impost, an engaged colonnette between the openings, and a spandrel embellished with a cast stone tablet set within an arched recess. On the east elevation second floor are cast stone surrounds with cast stone arched corbel tables below the sills. The second floor of the east and north elevations of the tower have identical paired openings set within embellished cast stone arches. Detailing includes a paneled spandrel accented by a circular ornament, engaged colonnettes flanking the openings, and a spiraled archivolt. The auditorium window surrounds are articulated in header and soldier brick courses. Stucco and brick tympanum, spiraled cast stone columns with composite capitals, and molded archivolts frame the second story window near west end of north elevation. The north elevation has a decorative raised brick circular window surround. There are cast stone arched corbel courses beneath the sills of second floor windows on the north and west elevations.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, Covering:

The roof has front and side gables with changes in level adjacent to the tower. It is covered with red clay barrel tiles and has copper rain gutters. Steel truss supports were added to the roofing system in 1934.

b. Dormers, Cupolas, Towers:

The tower is three-stories high with a brick veneer exterior, cantons, and a hipped tile roof. It rises in three increments with entries on north and east on the first floor, paired round-headed openings above entries on the second story, and a three bay arcaded belfry open on all four sides of the top level.

9. Architectural Details:

Architectural details include: an ornate tower with belfry, cast stone and brick arched corbeling, cast stone columns and piers with decorative capitals, an ornate cast stone raking cornice, cast stone stringcourse, circular brickwork below paired arched windows on west elevation, circular cast stone vents above second story windows of tower, and wrought iron gates enclosing a bay off of the covered walkway on the south elevation, west side.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

While the exterior of the building exhibits a sophisticated architectural vocabulary, the interior spaces are straightforward and utilitarian in character with little, if any, architectural detailing. The auditorium in Building B is a two-story room with a balcony, a stage, corbeled beams and arched, multi-paned windows. It constitutes, along with the tower, the most notable interior space. Classrooms comprise the other rooms in Building B.

a. Basement:

The building has a partial basement which contains a mechanical room and separate dressing rooms for boys and girls. (See basement floor plan layout).

b. First Floor Plan:

Double-loaded corridors run north-south and east-west with classrooms, the wood shop and auditorium opening onto them. Five classrooms are of identical shape and size while the wood shop and auditorium areas are larger, respectively. The first floor configuration is primarily intact. (See first floor plan layout)

c. Second Floor Plan:

Double-loaded corridors run north-south and east-west on the second floor. Classrooms, restrooms, a teachers' lounge, the home economics classroom, and the balcony of the auditorium below open onto these corridors. (See second floor plan layout)

2. Stairways:

Staircases, located at each end (east and west) of the building, have wood risers; treads; and balustrades.

3. Flooring:

Concrete flooring is found in corridors and wood shop room, maple wood floors are in the classrooms and on the auditorium stage, and there is white hexagonal tile flooring in the restrooms.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish:

Lath and plaster walls are throughout the building.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors:

Most of the classroom doors are non-original single slab wood doors with narrow lights glazed with safety glass.

b. Windows:

The overall fenestration pattern has not been extensively altered. The interior walls surrounding the window openings retain their original configurations, materials, and detailing in most locations.

6. Decorative Features and Trim:

Interior walls are trimmed with baseboards and chair rails.

7. Hardware:

While some original door hardware is intact, there is mostly non-original hardware (including door hardware) throughout the building.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

a. Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation:

Heating: Rooms were originally heated using a low-pressure steam boiler located in the basement of Building A that served individual radiators. These radiators are intact in Building B, though enclosed with non-original security cases, and are located in each room beneath the span of windows.

Air Conditioning: The building was not originally fitted with air conditioning. A centralized air cooling system was installed in Building A at some unknown date.

Ventilation: Ventilation was originally provided by the opening and closing of windows in the rooms.

b. Lighting:

Original electric lighting was incandescent. Non-original suspended fluorescent lighting was installed throughout the building at some unknown date.

c. Plumbing:

The girls' restroom is located at the west end of the building on the first floor. The boys' restroom is located at the west end of the building on the second floor. Single stall restrooms for teachers and administrators are located at both the east and west ends of the building. Restrooms are primarily intact with marble partition walls, porcelain valve toilets and cast iron trough sinks.

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d. Fixtures:

Cloakrooms with sinks are at one end of each classroom.

9. Original Furnishings:

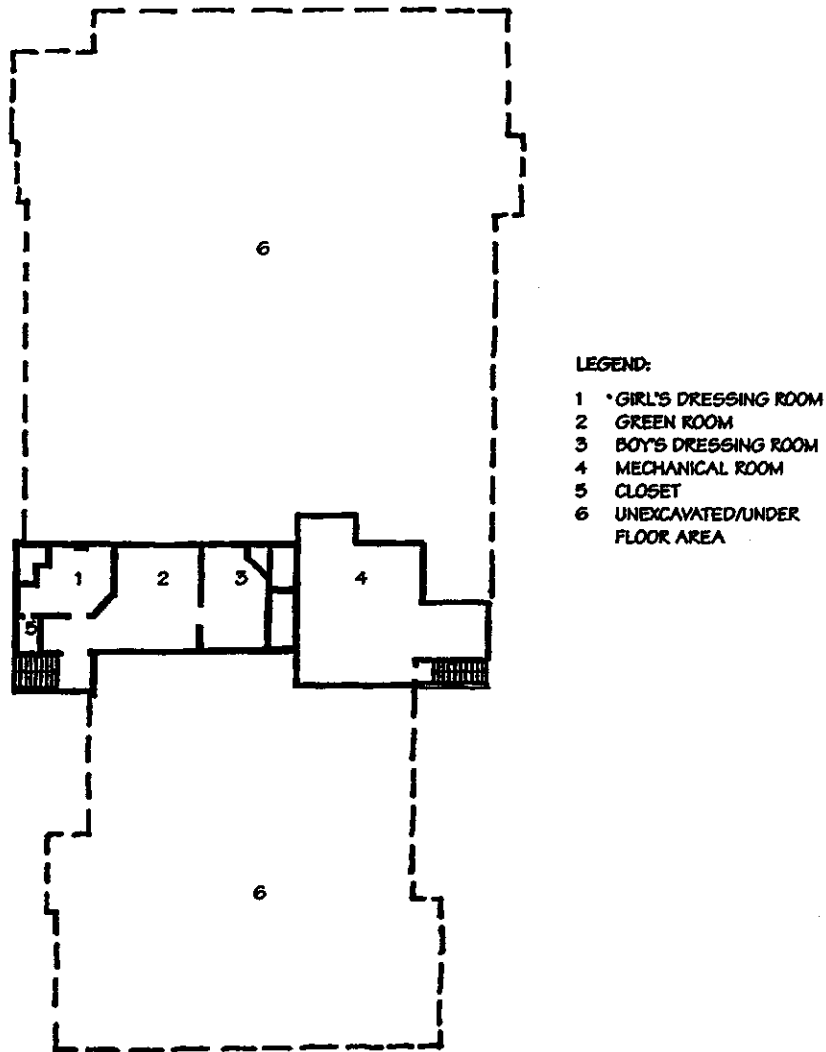
The wood shop classroom with its equipment and work tables are intact.
Chalkboards and wood trays are intact in all the classrooms. Light fixtures
have been replaced throughout the building.

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BUILDING B - CURRENT BASEMENT PLAN:

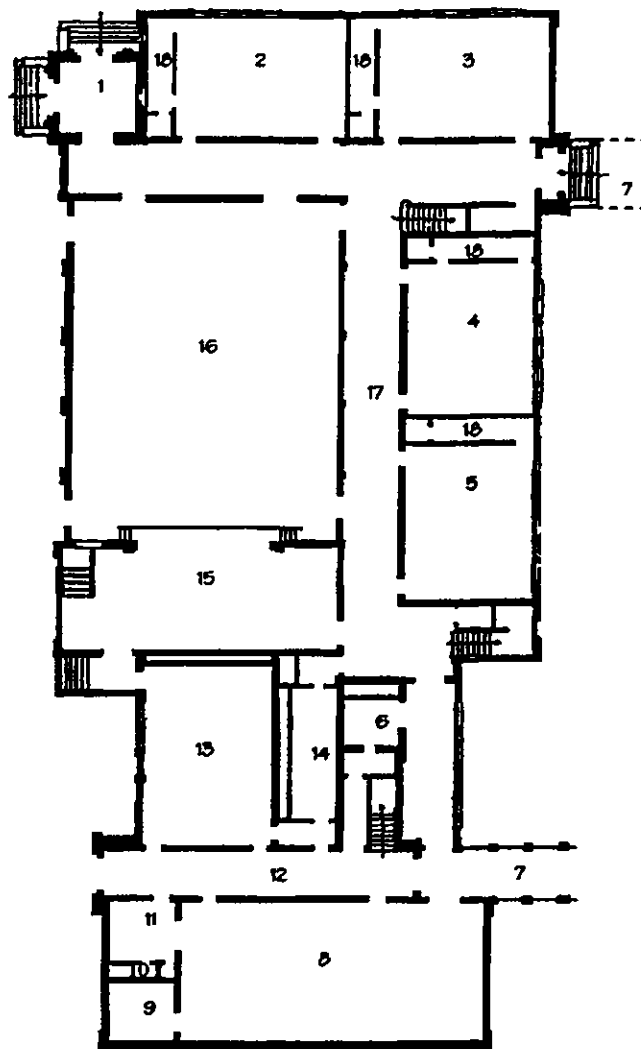


BUILDING "B" BASEMENT PLAN



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BUILDING B - CURRENT FIRST FLOOR PLAN:



LEGEND:

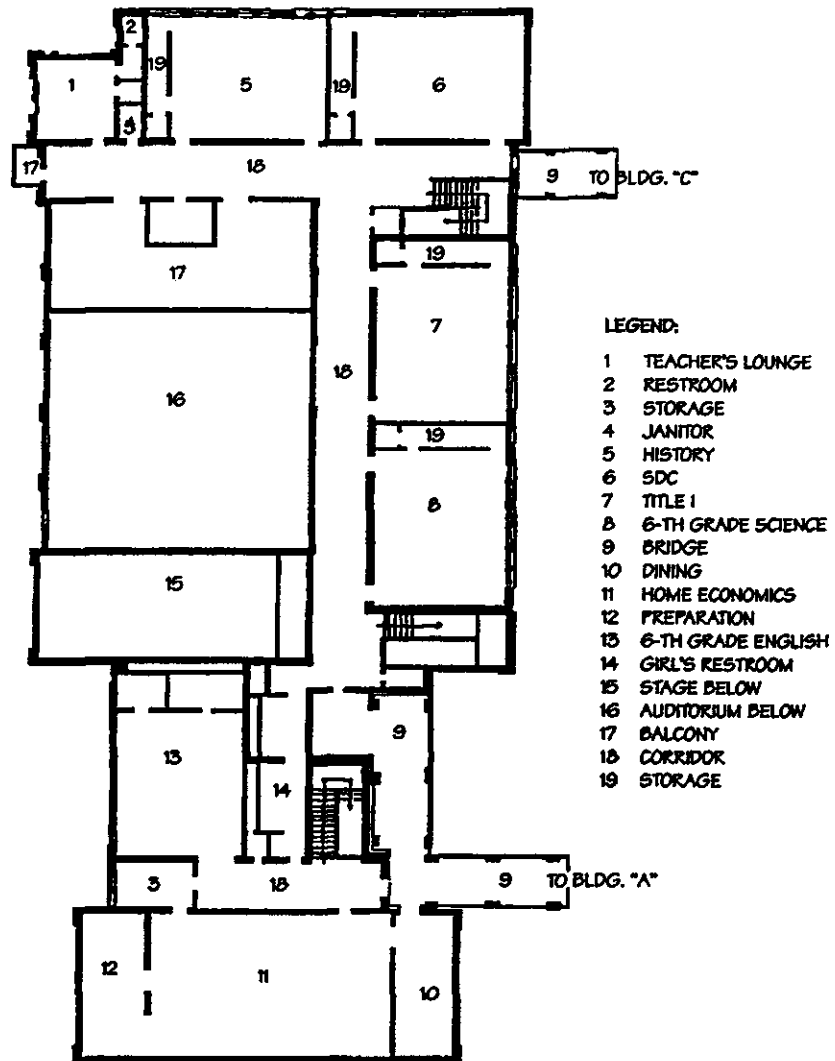
- 1 VESTIBULE/
AUDITORIUM ENTRY
- 2 GRADES 6-8
- 3 GRADES 6-8
- 4 GRADES 6-8
- 5 GRADES 6-8
- 6 HVAC
- 7 COVERED WALKWAY
- 8 WOOD SHOP
- 9 FINISH ROOM
- 10 RESTROOM
- 11 OFFICE
- 12 CORRIDOR
- 13 ESL 6-8
- 14 BOYS RESTROOM
- 15 STAGE
- 16 AUDITORIUM
- 17 CORRIDOR
- 18 STORAGE

BUILDING "B" FIRST FLOOR PLAN



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BUILDING B - CURRENT SECOND FLOOR PLAN:



BUILDING "B" SECOND FLOOR PLAN